



Urbanizing Resilience: Scaling Technical Solutions for Water Security and Land Degradation

COP 16, Green Zone, Pavilion 4

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

6 December, 15:30-17:00

Session Summary:

"Urbanizing Resilience" will explore how urban interventions can contribute to combating land degradation and drought in cities. The event will highlight the potential of rainwater harvesting systems, climate-resilient urban master planning, and permaculture in promoting climate change resilience in urban areas.

The discussion will focus on the ways that rainwater harvesting systems, even in dense urban environments, can reduce pressure on natural water resources, mitigate urban flooding, and support green spaces that help stabilize soil. Climate-resilient urban master planning will be showcased as a critical tool in aligning land-use policies with sustainability goals, contributing to the prevention of urban sprawl and reducing pressure on surrounding rural landscapes.

In addition, the event will delve into the role of permaculture in fostering sustainable land management, emphasizing how this approach can restore biodiversity, improve soil health, and create self-sufficient systems within urban settings. By integrating these technical solutions, cities can reduce their ecological footprint while contributing to the broader goals of land restoration and drought resilience.

The side event aims to facilitate a collaborative dialogue among experts, where speakers will brainstorm how these urban interventions can be interconnected to achieve greater impact. By discussing the synergies between water management, land use planning, and sustainable agriculture, the session will offer insights into how urban resilience can contribute to COP 16's goal of restoring degraded lands and enhancing drought resilience.

15:30-15:40 Opening Remarks + Overview of "Resilient Water Solutions" Adaptation Fund project / Panelist Introduction

Sara Hess, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, ESCWA

15:40-15:50 Climate mainstreamed urban planning in Lebanon

Rim Khamis, Project Manager, MORES/Setec, Lebanon

15:50-16:00 Climate mainstreamed urban planning in Jordan

Nuha Qutaish, Urban Planning and Design Expert, LDK/RSS

16:00-16:10 Fighting drought in urban centers, rainwater harvesting and other examples from Lebanon

Salem Darwich, Advisor to Minister of Agriculture, Lebanon

16:10-16:20 Urban interventions to combat land degradation, examples from Sudan

Fernando Murillo, Human Settlement Officer, UN-Habitat, KSA



- 16:20-16:30 Nature-based solutions to promote urban resilience
Mariam Shai, Urban Planner, AMAC. KSA
- 16:30-16:50 Moderated Panel Discussion and Q&A
- 16:50-17:00 Closing remarks
ESCWA and UN-Habitat